

A curious adaptation of habit to its environment of a Malayan mosquito.

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During a recent visit to the Gap, on the Selangor-Pahang boundary, which is at 2,800 feet, I observed a curious and interesting fact in the life of mosquito which seems worthy of record.

This mosquito, kindly identified for me by Dr. Stanton as *Chaetomyia (Leicesteria) flava*, Leicester, which had been caught in the resthouse and was kept in a test-tube, was observed to have attached to a hind-leg a mass which until closer examination, seemed to be one of those *Ceratopogon* which have a habit of attaching themselves to mosquitoes to suck out their body-juices. On examination however with a microscope it proved to be an ova-mass, and what was very interesting, from each ovum the head of a young larva was sticking out, the whole thing looking like a miniature nest of young sparrows.

The mosquito was introduced to a bottle in which was some water, when it immediately flew down to the water and dipped its hind-leg methodically into it. Immediately all the larvae came out of the ova-mass and swam away as lively as a crowd of children coming out of school on a holiday.

On two occasions I observed this phenomenon and on another I caught a specimen of the mosquito with the ova-mass on its leg from which all the larvae had gone.

I think it seems clear that the mosquito ovideposits on its own leg and that the phenomenon represents a device by which the mosquito is enabled to deposit its larvae in collections of water which are inaccessible to it for ordinary deposition; perhaps in bamboos, or in the leafy axils of plants like common *kladi* or pig-lily,¹ or it may be to save the eggs from some danger which they might incur if they were laid on water.

I am much indebted to Mr. de la Mare Norris of the Agricultural Department, F. M. S., for the drawing which is given.

1. Leicester in his monograph on *Culicidae of Malaya* 1908 says that he has found the adult larvae in bamboos and in coconut shells lying in the jungle.



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CHETOMYIA FLAVA.